

Completed Pollution Prevention Project Case Study

United States Department of Energy
Office of Environmental Management
Fact Sheet

Environmentally Preferable Procurement of Toner Cartridges Los Alamos National Laboratory

Original Problem

Although LANL was quite good about returning used toner cartridges for recycling, nearly all of the toner cartridges that were purchased were new ones. LANL was glad that the toner cartridges were being recycled instead of becoming waste, but at the same time LANL knew that they were not helping to "close the recycling loop" by buying new cartridges.

The Project Solution

Realizing that LANL purchases over 5000 toner cartridges each year, a decision was made to buy remanufactured toner cartridges whenever possible. When the most recent contract was negotiated with the vendors supplying toner cartridges to LANL, the contract was written so that remanufactured toner cartridges would be supplied whenever they were of comparable or lesser cost and available at the time of purchase.

Value of Improvement

Purchasing large quantities of remanufactured toner cartridges increases the demand for them, keeping existing remanufacturers in business and encouraging entrepreneurs to enter the field. Remanufacturing toner cartridges decreases the number of used cartridges that enter the landfill and saves virgin resources that might have been used to make new toner cartridges. Purchasing remanufactured cartridges saves money too since they are less expensive than new ones.

Lifecycle Waste Reduction

Lifecycle Waste Reduction	NA
Commencement Date	2001
Project Useful Life (Years)	Indefinite



DOE Monetary Benefits

Total Project Cost	NA
Lifecycle Savings	11-61% /cartridge
Return on Investment	NA

Benefits At-A-Glance

- Purchasing remanufactured toner cartridges helps to create a market for these products and save resources.
- The remanufactured toner cartridges cost between 11% to 61% less than new toner cartridges.
- The quality of the remanufactured toner cartridges has been very good, and no one has complained about receiving remanufactured cartridges instead of new ones.

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Summary Data	
Priority Area:	Waste Minimization Projects
Project Type:	Process Redesign / Recycling
Total Project Cost:	NA
Lifecycle Savings:	11-61% savings per remanufactured toner cartridge
Implementing Group:	BUS-5
Benefiting Groups:	All groups at LANL
Useful Life Years:	Indefinite
Return on Investment:	NA
Lifecycle Waste Reduction:	The remanufactured toner cartridges can be recycled in the same way as the new toner cartridges, so the volume of waste has not changed.
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